



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

July 2012

*A common thread,
the Willamette River is
important to all who call the
Willamette Valley home.*

your Willamette Valley

*When we see land as a community to which we belong,
we may begin to use it with love and respect.*

~ Aldo Leopold



©QuiltSalad



Patrick Stark/USFWS

A Heritage of Working Lands and Wild Places

For generations people have thrived in the Willamette Valley, where nature's magnificence is witnessed daily. The story of our heritage is told in this place, expressing our love of the land and the array of lifestyles it affords us. The Valley's richness and beauty give us

fertile land and travel destinations that contribute to our economy. It's a place that showcases the wonder of fish and wildlife, let's us play outside, provides clean water to drink, clean air to breathe, and healthy food to eat. The Valley's future is vital to all of us.

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, a longtime conservation partner in the Willamette Valley, is dedicated to working with Oregonians and building upon our mutual desire to call this special place home for generations to come.

America's Great Outdoors

If you thought the natural wonder of the Willamette Valley was only known to locals, guess again. The word is out! **America's Great Outdoors**, a 21st Century initiative to support a healthy population, conserve working lands and wildlife, and improve ways to connect people to the outdoors, identified the Willamette Valley as one of 101 places in the country considered the best opportunities to build upon our Nation's legacy with nature.

George Gentry/USFWS

Help Us Plan for the Future

In addition to America's Great Outdoors, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service recently completed "Conserving the Future," a forward-thinking vision for the National Wildlife Refuge System. What do these efforts mean to the Willamette Valley? Like so many others, we have a strong interest in sustaining the resources of the Valley. To this end, we are beginning the Willamette Valley Conservation Study. Read on to learn more and be sure to:

Join the Conversation!

Open Houses in July...Details Inside

Contact Us Anytime...See Back Page

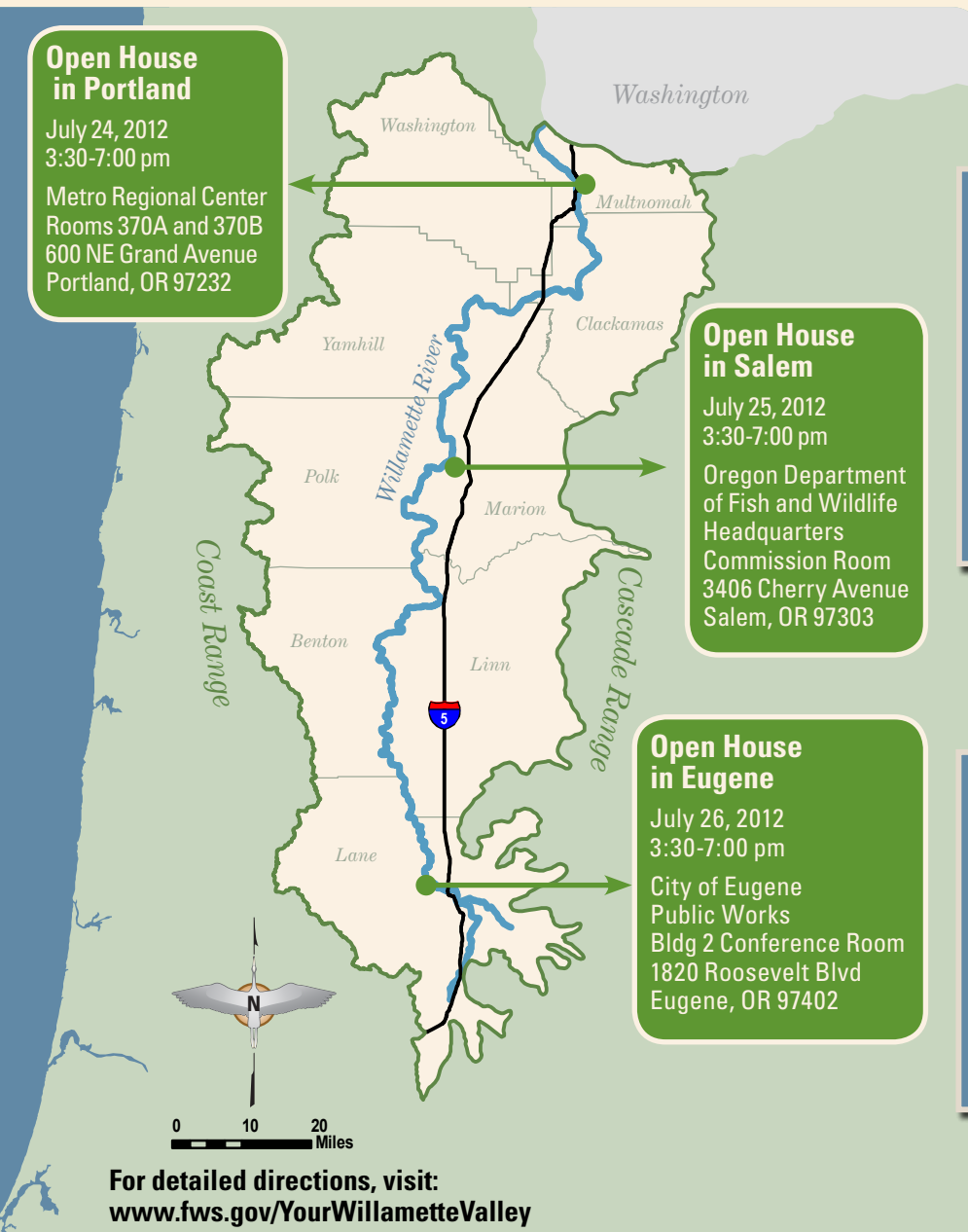


George Gentry/USFWS

America's Great Outdoors takes as its premise that lasting conservation solutions should rise from the American people, that the protection of our natural heritage is an objective shared by all Americans.

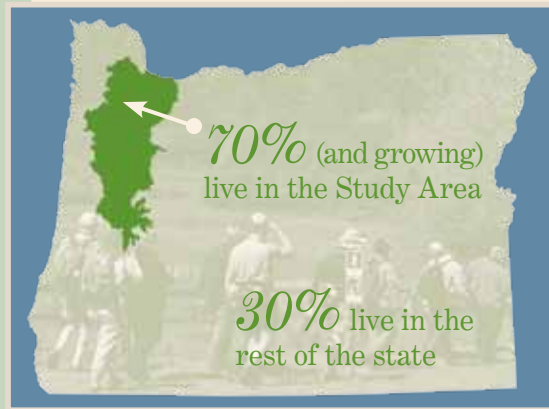
Willamette Valley Conservation Study Area

From the foothills of the Coast Range to the foothills of the Cascades and from Portland to Eugene, the footprint of the Willamette Valley Conservation Study Area encompasses a land heritage worth sustaining. With the Willamette River at its heart, the 3.7 million acre study area encompasses 9 counties and over 100 communities.



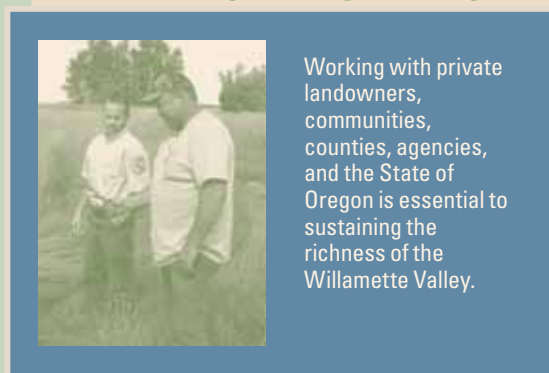
Why Here, Why Now?

A GROWING POPULATION



The Willamette Valley is home to 2.7 million people. This number is expected to significantly increase by 2040. A growing population means increased pressure on natural resources.

LANDOWNERS' HELP IS KEY



How We Might Help

What's in our conservation toolbox?

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service has many conservation related tools that could help sustain the Willamette Valley for future generations. For starters, the four National Wildlife Refuges in the Valley are great resources for important habitat and nature-based recreation.

Through a program called Partners for Fish and Wildlife, we work with private landowners, other agencies, and organizations to restore and manage habitat on private land throughout the Valley. We have also been working to help address the effects of wintering Canada geese in the Valley.

With the Conservation Study, we are interested in increasing our efforts to help meet the conservation and nature-based recreation needs of the Valley's residents and visitors.

How can we best help meet these needs? One of our initial thoughts is that implementing voluntary and collaborative conservation measures with private landowners, local communities, and partner organizations is key. This type of proactive, non-regulatory approach has been a successful model elsewhere in the country whereby the Service develops conservation easements with private landowners.

We are also interested in working with the farming community and all other

interested parties to determine what other measures we might implement to help with goose management. For example, we could explore developing some kind of 'working lands initiative' with farmers, ranchers, and forestry managers that could provide a form of assistance to landowners who are providing valuable wildlife habitat.

Another possibility is to provide additional National Wildlife Refuge lands that would create more habitat and recreational opportunities.

These are just a few examples of ways we might contribute to sustaining the natural resources of the Willamette Valley well into the future. What ideas do you have?



While the four National Wildlife Refuges within the Willamette Valley provide high quality habitat and sanctuary for Canada geese, they are not sufficient to provide for all of the geese that now winter here. The result is that many geese seek food and shelter in agricultural areas within the Valley and create significant damage to crops on private lands.



The fertile soils and temperate climate of the Willamette Valley support farming, ranching, and forestry practices as well as provide natural habitats for wildlife. Meeting the needs of agriculture and wildlife can often be accomplished simultaneously on the same tracts of land.

Join us at an Open House

We want to know what you think will keep the Willamette Valley a great place to live, work, and play for generations to come.

Portland

July 24, 2012
3:30-7:00 pm
Metro Regional Center
Rooms 370A and 370B
600 NE Grand Avenue
Portland, OR 97232

Salem

July 25, 2012
3:30-7:00 pm
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
Headquarters
Commission Room
3406 Cherry Avenue
Salem, OR 97303

Eugene

July 26, 2012
3:30-7:00 pm
City of Eugene
Public Works
Bldg 2 Conf Rm
1820 Roosevelt Blvd
Eugene, OR 97402



The benefits of nature-based recreation touch all spheres of our lives, from our physical and spiritual health to our economy. As our population grows, there will be a much greater need for additional nature-based recreational opportunities.



Conservation in the Valley

The future of conservation in the Willamette Valley is uncertain. While we are challenged by issues such as increased human population, habitat loss and fragmentation, a changing climate, reduced water quantity and

quality, invasive species, and agricultural crop damage by certain wildlife species, Oregonians have the opportunity to shape a sustainable and balanced future for life in the Valley. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service wants

to explore both time-tested and innovative ways to continue to contribute to a healthy Willamette Valley. Help us determine how to best conserve what we all cherish.



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
911 NE 11th Avenue
NWRS-PVS
Portland, OR 97232

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife
Service proudly announces
the start of the
***Willamette Valley
Conservation Study.***

*We invite you to learn about
what this is and find out
ways you can engage with us
in important conversations
about sustaining natural
resources in the Valley.*

We Want Your Input

The Willamette Valley Conservation Study asks:
How can the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service best increase our efforts
to help sustain the natural resources of the Willamette Valley?
We have some ideas and we want to hear yours.

There are multiple ways to get in touch with us:

e-mail: YourWillametteValley@fws.gov

comment form: fws.gov/YourWillametteValley/comment

call: **Jim Houk**
Conservation Study
Team Leader
541/760-4865

Kevin O'Hara
Conservation Planner
503/231-2086

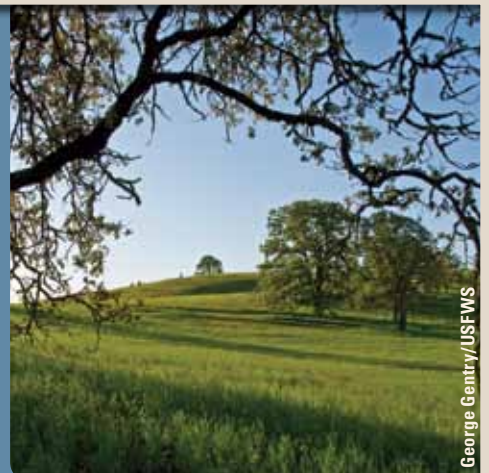
***Come and chat with us at
an Open House near you***

Portland	Salem	Eugene
July 24, 2012	July 25, 2012	July 26, 2012

Times and locations inside...

Join the Conservation Conversation

 facebook.com/YourWillametteValley
fws.gov/YourWillametteValley



*Signature Willamette Valley habitat, like
oak savanna, while in decline, presents a
great opportunity for public agencies and
private landowners to work together.*

*The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and
enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.*